

## THE CRISIS.

LETTER I.

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*To the Honorable JOSIAH S. JOHNSTON, U. S. Senator.*

SIR: While the critical condition of our country invokes every patriot to aid in averting the dangers which surround her, this duty is especially binding on all whose character and standing inspire their conduct with the force of an example. Unless the public have improperly given you credit for an understanding acute, comprehensive, and richly stored; for exact acquaintance with our history and institutions; for firmness, at once discreet and inflexible; and for patriotism too stern to be approached by corruption: you are under a responsibility to the nation, to your posterity, and to the friends of freedom every where, which you have neither the power, nor, as I persuade myself, the desire, to elude. As a Senator, you have acted a distinguished and honorable part in the councils of the republic. As a man, you are known to want no species of courage, except, to use your own eloquent words, "the moral courage to desert a cause or betray a party." As a citizen, you, and men like you, are now called on to devote your energies to the solemn business of saving your country from destruction. At this awful period no patriotic statesman can justly consider any moment of his time as a moment of leisure. This is no season for closet abstractions, nor for literary pleasures. The Gauls are at the Capitol.

When the American People confided the administration of their affairs to Andrew Jackson, as a reward for a conspicuous but exaggerated service, the generosity of the act was at least equaled by its imprudence. Time enough has since passed, to test the predictions of his political opponents. And however opinions may differ concerning the degree to which these predictions have been fulfilled, no informed and candid observer can doubt that nearly every thing has been done to destroy the constitution, which is permitted by its forms. Sometimes even its forms have

been disregarded; nor does it require much sagacity to foresee that, should the reigning faction continue in power for another Presidential term, they will be violated at pleasure. The scheme for reforming fictitious abuses, with which the People were deluded, has been practically disclosed. They find that, like the man in the fable, they wooed a goddess, only to embrace a cloud. Well will it be for them, if this cloud do not burst in ruin on their institutions, their liberty, and their hopes. Already is the nation dishonored abroad. Already despotism and corruption stalk at home, with brazen front and lordly stride.

The parasites of power eulogize the foreign policy of their masters. But what have the President and his cabinet effected, deserving praise or even toleration, which their predecessors had not nearly consummated? In some instances, they have been the humble agents for signing papers; in others, they have performed the service, scarcely more intellectual, of assenting to principles settled by former negotiations: but, where they have depended on their own resources, crudity, rashness, usurpation, or disgrace, generally characterises their proceedings. Into their treaty with France, they have introduced a vexatious novelty in our commercial relations, which the very Secretary of State, who instructed the negotiating minister, denounces in his official correspondence with the Danish General Van Scholten. The President originated a mission, and permitted a session of the Senate to pass over, without nominating to that body the commissioners whom he had appointed; and in other diplomatic appointments, he has endeavored to elude or procrastinate the action of his constitutional advisers. Often, too, has he degraded the country in the person of the minister. To one court he despatched as envoy a drudge of faction, on whom public contempt had fixed an ignominious title. According to late accounts, this incarnate libel on the office of a minister, had "filled the measure of his glory" by receiving, in reward for some base, but characteristic conduct, corporal chastisement from his own secretary. The ambassador selected for another court, was a fugitive from an indictment for perjury; who has since been permitted to abandon his trust, for no other reason, reconcilable with the President's taste, than because



he had not been convicted of the crime before he was appointed to the mission. To one of the first European Powers, a man demented by pride and drinking, was sent as the representative of the United States. After remaining at his post for a few days, having succeeded in making his country ridiculous, he fled to England, to loiter for months in the antechambers of her nobles, a patient petitioner for the honor of cringing at their feet. For this conduct, and for his refusal to repair to the seat of Government, on his return home, and render an account of his embassy, the Executive has undertaken, through his officials, to apologize to an indignant country. It is said that the vagrant minister was too decrepit to travel thirty-eight miles on a smooth turnpike road from Baltimore to Washington, though he could travel from the United States to Russia; thence to Great Britain; thence to "Roanoke;" and there expectorate a stump speech against time. Will posterity believe that the Government excuse for Mr. Randolph's residence in England is, that London was a more convenient place than St. Petersburg for transacting business with the Emperor of Russia?

But our humiliations, grievous as they are in Colombia, in Central America, and in Russia, seem honorable distinctions, when compared with our fouler disgrace at the court of London. The administration were pledged, by their denouncement, when in opposition, of Mr. Adams' policy concerning the West India trade, and by falsely imputing to him the change in the manner of that trade, which they falsely called the loss of it, to buy at any price the name of *recovering* it. Mr. Van Buren, as Secretary of State, instructed our new minister to propose, promptly and liberally, national dishonor as the price. The instructions were obeyed; the offer was accepted; we received advantages, so far forth scarcely even nominal; the British cabinet laughed at us; and the rest of the world held up their hands in amazement at the wilful, the sought, the deep degradation of the last republic. Is this craven Secretary to escape with merely the refusal of the Senate to confirm his mission to a court before which he had prostrated his country in dust and ashes, and would have been ready, if confirmed, to do so again? That assembly has, indeed, by rejecting

his nomination, regained the august character which once belonged to an American Senate; and its reasons for the rejection brand Martin Van Buren with perpetual disgrace. But, is the punishment commensurate with the crime? Such a crime, committed by a British minister, would endanger his head. The treaty of Paris, in 1763, stipulated for some cessions of conquered territory, which were offensive to the pride of England; and the Duke of Bedford narrowly escaped an attainder for signing that treaty. No parallel to the dishonor inflicted on the republic by Mr. Van Buren's instructions, exists in the history of the nation with which he was negotiating. The most disgraceful event in her annals is, perhaps, the French pension to her King, Charles II. But this was merely a corrupt bargain, secretly made, between two individuals. The mendicant mission of Mr. M'Lane was a public and national act, to which the United States stood committed by official turpitude.

Passing to our relations with the Indian tribes, we find that the principles of justice and humanity, on which all former administrations had based them, have been subverted by President Jackson. The only suggestion on any primary subject, in the deluge of recommendations with which he has inundated Congress, that has been adopted, relates to these unhappy nations. A bill, iniquitous and oppressive in its character, was passed, through the fraudulent practices of the Executive: And this law, which offered to its victims the alternatives of exile on the one hand, or political slavery and civil oppression on the other, has been so executed, under his auspices, as to make the Indians the prey of the most barefaced cheats. In one stupendous act of swindling for the benefit of the President's chamberlain, the only question is, who were defrauded, the Indians or the United States? The fact of the fraud is plain and incontestable.

A yet darker pencil than that of Tacitus would be required to portray the proceedings of the administration at home—proceedings which, for the sake of brevity, must be termed their "policy." Its leading principle is, passive obedience in all things to the will of the President. To the scheme of fastening this policy on the country, the whole patronage of the Executive is devoted; and the agents relied on are the powerful passions of hope and fear. The



natural reluctance of man to occasion injury to himself, and to those whom Providence has made the objects of his special care, is perverted by the "Reformers" into an instrument for enslaving the mind of the virtuous office holder. With officers of a different character, no ceremony is necessary. According to the new system, the mere suspicion of want of idolatry to the President, places the suspected individual under the ban. Even the most cautious neutrality in party collisions, is a disqualification for the public service; but avowed opposition, however moderate, is the signal for assaults on the reputation of the offender. Honesty and capacity, no longer recommendations, are sometimes positive objections to a candidate for employment under a chief magistrate, who has dedicated himself to the punishment of adversaries and neutrals; to the pampering of parasites; and to the corruption of the People, through means of offices created by themselves for their own benefit. Incumbents of proved competency and blameless morals, are turned adrift, to make room for the proteges of cabals, or for personal favorites, often without a pretence of merit, and often, too, without the negative advantage of not having offended against the penal laws of the land. Faithful to the doctrine announced by his adherents, that the offices of the country are "the natural and lawful spoils of the victory," President Jackson has even submitted his own despotic will to the requisitions of bargains preceding his election. Of his docility in this respect, a specimen is afforded by the "Boston disclosures," as they are generally styled. The evidence springs out of a quarrel among his partisans about the "spoils," and demonstrates that, during his canvass for the Presidency, the federal offices in Boston were divided, in advance, by his agents, among themselves, and that he bestowed them in obedience to that arrangement. The future historian of this administration, in recording their favoritism, will be suspected of borrowing from the annals of the most vicious eras of the most vicious monarchies. One favorite is appointed Governor of Michigan, with the privilege of a long residence in Pennsylvania. Another supersedes a meritorious incumbent in the office of Marshal at Key West; Mr. Van Buren illegally advances to him twenty-five hundred dollars from the public treasury;

another person is appointed to the office, but the favorite has spent the money; and it has been judicially decided that the United States have not even the right to recover it, the pretended bond on which it was given being as worthless as the favorite himself. Whole families are quartered on the public treasury. When the natural relations of a court favorite are provided for, or deemed, for some imputed virtue, to be unfit objects of Executive bounty, new leeches are sought among his matrimonial connexions. The good fortune of "brothers-in-law" has become a by-word. Even boys have been converted into statesmen by the credit of their patrons at court. One has been for a long time our minister *de facto* to Russia. Another, who had not even reached the age fixed, somewhat rashly, by law, as the period of discretion, was made the contingent Governor of a territory. This appointment, it was argued, was extremely judicious, because the great Pitt became prime minister of England at twenty-four years of age.

President Jackson's stipendiaries declining any defence, in detail, of his abuse of Executive patronage, aver that the appointing and removing power is his constitutional right, to be exercised according to his irresponsible discretion. This atrocious doctrine is worthy of the acts which it is adduced to palliate. Dr. Johnson has somewhere remarked, that Kings have this much at least in common with their fellow men, that they do not think it unnecessary to give reasons for their conduct; and he sarcastically adds, that the reason assigned by Louis XIV. for his war on the Dutch was, "that it was necessary to his glory." The Jackson creed advances us a step further in despotism. We are gravely told that the President is above the obligation of explaining his conduct. Such was not the doctrine of the framers of the constitution. Had it been so, that instrument would never have been adopted. The power of appointment and removal was regarded by our fathers as a power, of which the grant to some branch of the Government was necessary; and they selected the President to be its depositary, because it could be more conveniently exercised by him than by any other branch, and because his responsibility was more simple and direct. Mr. MADISON, in his remarks on the removing power, uttered



these memorable words: "I contend that the wanton removal of meritorious officers would subject him [i. e. the President] to impeachment and removal from his own high trust." The father of the Constitution also said, that, even if such conduct did not produce an impeachment before the Senate, "it would amount to an impeachment before the community." Destitute as General Jackson is of political knowledge, he has, doubtless, (to say nothing of the confidence afforded to him by his own impunity,) absorbed from the conversation of others, a conviction that a President of the United States may do much to deserve, constitutionally, impeachment, without actually incurring it. The practical peculiarities of our polity forbid a resort to the extreme remedy whenever it can be avoided. But this consideration should stimulate to increased activity that other principal check on the chief magistrate, which the framers of the constitution relied on—*public opinion*. The greater the trust, the more carefully should the manner in which it is discharged be watched. The absence of any specific punishment, short of impeachment, for its abuse, only furnishes additional considerations for this vigilance, and imposes on the President the duty of gratifying the reasonable desire of his countrymen to understand the motives and principles of his public acts. General Jackson's obligation in this respect was emphatically confessed during the first year of his Presidency, in a promise, conveyed through the official journal of the Government, to transmit to Congress, at their ensuing session, a list of his removals, accompanied by the reasons in each case. But the design, perhaps never seriously entertained, was abandoned. The reasons were such, in most instances, as even General Jackson was ashamed of, though he continued to act on them. Unable to present any explanation fit for public inspection, he now boldly stands upon an asserted irresponsibility. The violated promise, and the ground now taken, contribute to illustrate a character at once deceitful and audacious.

The despotism under which the country groans, is without any precedent in the history of free nations, that has not ended in Revolution. Happily, our polity prescribes the milder, but sufficient remedy, of a change of councils through the intervention of the ballot box. Never was there a period

in our annals when so many high considerations demanded such a change. The measures which mainly contributed to overthrow the administration of the elder Adams, were the alien and sedition laws. And what were these celebrated laws? The alien law, passed June 25, 1798, clothed the President with the power, for two years, of ordering out of the country such foreigners as he should deem dangerous to the peace and safety of the United States, or should reasonably suspect of treasonable or secret machinations against the Government; and on proof, which it designated the manner of taking, that such suspected persons were harmless, authorized the President to license them to remain. The sedition law, passed July 14, 1798, to expire March 3, 1801, enacted, that unlawful combinations to oppose the measures of Government, and malicious libels against it, either House of Congress, or the President, should be punished by fine and imprisonment. These laws were passed during the excitement produced by the foreign policy of Revolutionary France; they were limited in their duration; and they were the solemn acts of the Representatives of the People and of the States. But they threw the whole country into a flame, because they were considered as being oppressive restraints on personal liberty; and the People refused to re-elect the President who signed these laws, though he was endeared to the mass as an illustrious father of their Independence.

Is there any thing in the alien and sedition laws, or in their collateral circumstances, so odious as the sweeping tyranny, practised in a period profoundly tranquil, by the present chief magistrate, associated with corruption, and aiming to become a permanent policy? Those ancient statutes had at least the merit of being general and known rules of action. According to the Jackson system for crushing freedom of opinion, the party, instead of being invited to an investigation of his offence, is tried unheard, or only with the mockery of a hearing, and condemned on the secret testimony of informers or expectants. The alien law did not, as the Jackson code does, include the native or adopted citizen in its penalties. The sedition law not only secured a trial to the accused, but relaxing the strictness of the common law, permitted him to give the truth



in evidence. In the Jackson code, the common law principle, "the greater the truth the greater the libel," exists in exacerbated force. He who expresses a doubt of the President's infallibility, is *prima facie* guilty of a libel. But if he attempts to sustain his opinion by evidence, his criminality is complete; and the whole power of the Executive is wielded for his destruction.

EDMUND PENDLETON.

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### LETTER II.

*To the Honorable JOSIAH S. JOHNSTON, U. S. Senator.*

SIR: President Jackson's policy, when referred to the test of his former professions, deserves a commentary which it is impossible to express in language consistent with the respect due to his office. We all remember the pledges under which he succeeded to the Presidential chair; we have witnessed his subsequent acts; and we shrink, disgusted and detesting, from the contrast. Never did drunken mendicant proclaim his sobriety more sturdily, than did this man and his emissaries declare that he had no desire for office, and would serve as President for one term only; that party spirit should be exterminated; that private reputation should be respected; that an election to Congress should be a disqualification for federal trusts; that the press should be deemed a Vestal guarding the sacred fire of liberty, and never be approached by the temptations of patronage; that the will of the People should be obeyed; that the expenses of the Government should be reduced; and that a cabinet should be formed by extracting the quintessence of all the wisdom and virtue in the land. These, and other clamorous promises, implied charges against the Adams administration, of which no reasonable man believed a particle; but, connected with the battle of New Orleans, and with the pretence that General Jackson's plurality in the electoral colleges in 1825, entitled him to

an election, at that time, by the House of Representatives, they became a powerful tide on which he floated into office. Within the period of a few months he proved false to every one of them; and his subsequent career does credit to his perseverance in treachery.

How has his coyness about office been exemplified? One of his friends, having the authority of his pledges and messages, proposed in the House of Representatives, an amendment of the constitution inhibiting the re-election of any President: This friend was forthwith outlawed by the Government officials, and excommunicated from the political church. What shall be said of the letter, soliciting the President's re-election, written by his private Secretary to Pennsylvania, and sent thither from his own house, and under his own frank? Or of his studious accommodation of the public policy to the interests and even the humors of particular States? Nothing, indeed, but the excitement of the day, during his canvass for the Presidency, could have protected from universal observation, the insincerity of his homilies concerning office. The evidence then existing on that subject, has received new illustration from the recent appearance of certain letters from his minions, Lewis and Eaton, detailing plans for promoting his election. If, after due reflection on General Jackson's character, on the intimacy of both, and the cohabitation of one of these persons with him, any man sincerely believes that he neither prompted, sanctioned, nor knew of those letters, such a skeptic is a fitter subject for a writ of lunacy than for an argument.

The pledge against party spirit has, I admit, been redeemed *literally*: for parties are sometimes supposed to be conducive to the healthful action of the republican polity; and General Jackson would, therefore, have been untrue to his real principles, if he had not sought to destroy them. But he has recovered his consistency, by being false to the *spirit* of his pledge. He has subjected the republic to the dominion of a *faction*, owning no rule of conduct but devotion to his person: aiming at no object but a perpetuation of its power, and a new division of the "spoils of the victory." Such a faction has naturally attracted to itself the fugitives and outcasts of parties founded on principle, and adventurers



of a description which had never before ventured to attach itself to any party. The candidate for preferment may advocate any doctrines whatever, provided he thinks the President never does and never can do wrong, and that every Senator who votes against a nomination, deserves to lose his ears at least, (as Mr. Lacock was near doing for another offence against General Jackson,) if not to be hung under the "second section." The distinctions of aristocrat and republican, federalist and democrat, liberal and radical, tariffite and anti-tariffite, consolidator and nullifier, and all other differences of principle, are forgotten in the absorbing question, "Is he a *Jacksonite*?" For it is not the least alarming sign of the times, that a considerable portion of the community is content to bear the name and wear the livery of one of its weakest and most vitious members.

If the President's respect for private reputation is manifested in the system of slander practised by himself and his agents, on the victims of his proscription, it can only be on Milton's maxim, that there are some,

"Of whom to be disprais'd were no small praise."

His fidelity to the promise of conferring office on none but honest and capable men, is seen in the appointment of parasites, peculators, and felons in embryo. Truly it would seem, in this era of reform, that, next to political treachery, public robbery, and the indictment of a grand jury, are the most availing claims to stations of dignity and profit. While minor rewards are bestowed on inferior delinquents, Jeffers receives a foreign mission, and Kendall a high post in the treasury. At first, Woodman and Weirich were obliged to be content with Post Offices; but, as they have both been since convicted of larceny, they are in full training for the diplomatic line, or for seats in the customs.

Whatever may be thought, on principle, of General Jackson's rule for excluding members of Congress from federal offices, his practice on this subject is undoubtedly one of the most signal monuments to his perfidy, which a "labor of love" for three years in the service, has enabled him to raise. We have lately been told by a former depository of his confidence, that in some instances he has even refused office to individuals, because they were *not* members of

Congress. His promised respect for the liberty of the press has been manifested in a scheme to overawe and to corrupt it: a scheme proved by his proscription of every editor suspected of anti-Jacksonism; and by the liberality, wholly disproportionate to the numerical relations of persons connected with the press to the rest of the community, with which they have been made the recipients of the Executive bounty.

What has become of the pledge to revere the will of the People? It is belied by the whole course of this administration, but most signally by the vetos of the Executive on their bills for internal improvements, vetos effectively assailing the whole system. His unexampled prodigality is a commentary equally striking on his promises of retrenchment.

The vision of a ministry of sages and saints, with which the nation had been dazzled, resulted in the metamorphosis, as violent as any in Ovid, of Van Buren, Ingham, Eaton, Branch, and Berrien, into a cabinet. Dissensions soon arose between these men, which the conduct of their chief encouraged, till some of them almost, if not fully, reached the point of fighting in his presence. "Retiracy" became necessary; and the obnoxious portion of this cabinet refusing to go out alone, the two favorite members were constrained to set the example: an example farther recommended to the Secretary of State by his consciousness of inadequacy to his office. The Secretary of War has, in his subsequent appeal, insinuated that, for his part, he had no such feeling. This is not surprising. A mind like his can be enabled only by preternatural aid, to perceive its own unrivaled dulness.

As the age of reform has produced no Hogarth, however fruitful of subjects for his pencil, we must despair of seeing perfectly delineated, the scenes of the cabinet dissolution. We may imagine, however, some features of the sketch. While the five patriots are retreating from their paradise, the public treasury, their looks linger on this noble, but fast vanishing prospect; and a thousand recollections arise unbidden, to soften or to embitter their present calamity. A tear steals down the iron visage of Ingham as he murmurs in Eaton's ear,

"Thou hast called me thine angel in moments of bliss;"



but the tear is frowned away, as he adds loudly, and with stern resolve,

“Still thine *angel* I’ll be ’mid the horrors of this—”

Berrien exclaims, in his smoothest tones, we have been “lovely and pleasant in our lives, and in our death we will not be divided.” Poor Branch’s head is in a quandary. He knows not what to *think* of the catastrophe. The President insists on discharging his unhappy servants, but gives them all excellent characters. To his own little Dutchman he gives something better—the promise of another post with higher wages; adding, in a whimper, “I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan; very pleasant hast thou been to me; thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women.” “*The love of women!*” softly echoes the classical Mr. Berrien, alas! “*Teterrima belli causa.*”

A chief magistrate who had continued these men in office, regardless of the pernicious effects of their counsels on the country, dismissed them only when the measure seemed requisite to the interests of his faction. The notable expedient adopted to save appearances, was worthy of the heart that prompted, and of the head that contrived it. But the dismissals purged the nation of a cabinet which had been for two years the objects of venal praise and public contempt; and so far was a fit subject for public gratulation, base and *ineffable* as were the President’s motives for this palace revolution. The People were partially extricated from the intrigues of Van Buren; and were presented with an opportunity which they have embraced, of contemplating his real character. They now well understand that he has advanced himself by steadily applying a small intellect to small things; by despising moral restraints; and by so far controlling a temper naturally bad, as to pursue, whenever conducive to his interests, a purely passionless career. The impulses which sometimes divert lofty minds and generous natures from their purpose, are by him subjected to the same drill that he studies to impose on a great nation. But he stands detected before his fellow citizens; and they feel no more emotion at the exposure, than is felt by the spectator of a juggler’s show, when the tricks are explained.

The retreat of this cunning adventurer's associates was not less agreeable than his own to the People. They were relieved from the malignant Ingham, and from the incubus of Eaton's stupidity: They were "disinfected" of Branch's melancholy weakness: And, without a sigh of regret, they saw Berrien retire on his system of paltry, shuffling politics. It seems, however, to be the fatal distinction of General Jackson's administration, that if ever, in violation of its general principles, he confers a particular benefit on the country, he is sure to inflict on it simultaneous evil and disgrace. Justly as all these men deserved expulsion, a majority of them was expelled for an unworthy cause. And the pander, who, for his own miserable ends, had aggravated the cabinet diseases, till they became mortal, was rewarded, while the nation was punished, by his mission to the first court in Europe, and the last in the world to which *he* should have been sent. His former colleagues remained to nauseate the public with a controversy between themselves, to which the President also was a party, and in which the charges of dishonor, folly, tyranny, and assassination, were flung around without scruple and without stint.

Some of the broken pledges heretofore remarked on, as having been made anterior to General Jackson's Presidency, were renewed in his messages to Congress; but they were renewed only to be violated again. The causes of this solemn mockery are to be sought, sometimes in a thirst for re-election, partaking too much of the brute appetite, to permit the exercise of the reasoning faculty; sometimes in a bloated arrogance which riots in insults to public opinion; but more frequently in the attractions which perfidy presents to both his taste and his understanding. The recommendations in his messages, of constitutional amendments, excluding a President from re-election, and members of Congress from federal offices, invite reflections on his practice on these subjects, which no terms in our language, nor, I suppose, in any other, are competent to express. But the contrast does not transcend that of the promise in his inaugural address, to "keep steadily in view the limitations as well as the extent of the Executive power," with his disregard, in point of fact, of both its limitations and its extent. Only a few days after he had read this two-penny State



paper, he practised a fraud on the Senate, commencing a system of usurpations, which he has since "kept steadily in view." On the other hand, he has permitted the legitimate authority of the federal Government to slumber, whenever its exercise, however loudly invoked by his oath of office, seemed likely to embarrass his electioneering plans. His submission to the threats of Georgia, encouraged that State to defy the federal power, and is the true source of the present type of the nullification malady.

Bad examples from high places are dangerous under any form of Government; but to the republican polity, of which virtue is the essential principle, their long continued toleration must be fatal. Already have the enormities of our chief magistrate, and the perfidy involved in them, blunted, to an alarming degree, the moral sense of the country. In a limited monarchy, were General Jackson the hereditary sovereign, either his corruption would cause a revolution, or his weakness would lead to the appointment of a regency to administer the Government during the residue of his life.\* But in this free and enlightened republic, not only has impunity been hitherto extended to them, but he ventures to solicit a re-election to the high office he has dishonored. Encouraged by his effrontery, his followers require the plainest moral distinctions to be relaxed in their favor, and are daily familiarizing the public mind to spectacles of political profligacy. One Senator boasts of his surly independence; loses his seat; the propriety of the boast is exemplified by a statement, that in disobedience to a rescript from the court, he had withheld his family from the contagion of its vices; the ex-Senator, eager to recover his forfeited seat and vanished influence, bullies the editor who made the statement; in the same spirit, he designates as "the Cincinnatus of America," the man whom, in his heart, he despises; and yet, this "surly" sycophant vexes, unrebuked, the public ear with his perpetual claim to the character of a Cato. Another Senator, known as the fabricator of a falsehood, unfitting him for any social intercourse, except with the tenants of a penitentiary, is permitted to

\* The American People are, to be sure, under a regency; but it is a regency appointed by the *non compos* himself, and its members are Lewis, Kendall, &c.

rise in the Senate, and coolly declare, that "it is never right to inquire into the expediency of doing wrong." A minion is appointed by the President to an anomalous embassy: forgetting decorum and common humanity, in the burning desire to snatch his wages, he hastens to the Atlantic, leaving his wife on a dying bed, where in a few days, perhaps on the next day afterwards, she actually died. Individuals known formerly as the bitter satirists of General Jackson, are taken to his bosom. One of his confidential "organs" is the editor of a leading print, whom he had formerly denominated a "rascal;" and this editor, who had before denounced him as a "curse," now adores him as a God. This instance is only one amid the multitude of the same kind, which the annalist of the present administration, if faithful to his duty, must record. The resentments which rage in General Jackson's breast more fiercely than in the breasts of most other men, though deaf to the voice of mercy, are at once disguised when the proselyte can guaranty any gratification to his more recent animosities, or any aid to his unholy ambition. The extreme venom of this man's heart is a phenomenon in natural history; but the calculating spirit that controls it, is a wonder in morals equally extraordinary and surprising. Such outrages on decency has the nation become accustomed to witness, that the very men who had lauded the President for preferring his conscience to his popularity, in vetoing internal improvements, are now preparing to laud him for obeying the People instead of his conscience, in his anticipated signature to a bill rechartering the Bank of the United States, should such a bill, in despite of his shuffles, be passed at the present session of Congress. His entire ignorance of finance, displayed in his attacks on this excellent institution, and demonstrated by Congressional committees of his political friends, his sycophants applaud as a marvel of learning; his crude scheme for erecting on its ruins, a machine for drawing within the Executive clutch the money of the citizen, they describe as the *ne plus ultra* of wisdom and disinterestedness; his manœuvres to trick the bank into a postponement of its claims, they admire so profoundly, that they can scarcely find language in which to express the sentiment; and the official contradictions between himself and the treasury minister concerning it,



they estimate as showing his Generalship even more conspicuously than it had been exhibited by his favorite battle of New Orleans. And General Jackson himself, who has practically subserved the cause of nullification more efficiently than all the declaimers in South Carolina have done or can do; and who has been publicly charged by the Governor of that State, but the other day in his confidence, with approving that prominent feature of the doctrine, the repeal of the 25th section of the judiciary act; this very President ventures to insult the understandings of his fellow citizens by anathemas against nullification. Even a State, in her political character, can consent to consign herself as a theme for mockery to future times. Because the President, who had swollen nullification to its present size, quarreled with the Vice President, and the Vice President stepped forward as the patron of nullification, Georgia, after having been its conspicuous practical assenter, by a legislative act denounces the doctrine, and in the same moment issues, through her Governor, a manifesto of rebellion against the United States.

In the better days of the Republic, such exhibitions as these might have provoked the laughter of a few satirists; but in the breasts of the community at large, they would have kindled a flame of indignation. Since the poison of Jacksonism has been infused into our system, they are too frequent and familiar to provoke either a smile or a frown.

The tyranny and corruption with which General Jackson has overshadowed the land, are scarcely more detestable, than the imbecility connected with them is contemptible. Appointments made and revoked in the same moment: public acts based on the hoaxes of wags: conversations, publicly held with the President, disclosing on his part an ignorance disgraceful even to *him*:\* piebald messages, of which

\* Among the anecdotes exemplifying the extreme, and, indeed, ludicrous ignorance of the "Greatest and Best," the following may be mentioned for the benefit of the future historian:—

In speaking of the duties of "*my* office," the President dilated on his parental care of commerce; and announced his determination to extend the relations between the United States and the Sandwich islands, so as to allow us to import, for ship-building, the fine teak *which grew so abundantly on those islands*.

Conversing once with a gentleman on the chances of war in Europe, the

the patches are contributed from every quarter, claiming him as their author in a strain of egotism that defeats its object: declarations against evidence, which prove either deliberate untruth on the part of the President, or a want of memory, that nothing but dotage could have produced: these are only some of the scenes acted by the Chief Magistrate of the United States in the face of his dishonored country. Palpable as are the vices and weakness of his administration, that man knows but little of Jacksonism who supposes that their existence is admitted by the faction at large. The grosser their character, the bolder is the denial. Still, however, the "palace slaves" do not deem it safe to rest entirely on the denial; and they betake themselves to apologies equally false. One of these is, that his obnoxious measures are imputable to imposition and bad advice. Even this expedient to shield him from responsibility, miserable as it is, is abandoned on suitable occasions. Only the other day, when the Senate were discussing Mr. Van Buren's instructions to our minister at London, Samuel Smith, that veteran trickster, who had gained his seat by deception, de-

President ingeniously distinguished "Russia proper," from her "Germanic and Italian provinces," and from "Belgic Russia."

On opening some Geographical Gazetteer, he denounced the author for ignorantly representing France to be bigger than England; and pointed triumphantly to two maps on his table—one of France on a given scale, the other of England on a larger scale.

On another occasion, some of the company present happening to converse on "horticulture," the Royal ear caught the word: "Madam," said Gen. Jackson, "our Tennessee plan about horses is decidedly the best—we *cross the breed*."

It was, I believe, before his election to the Presidency, that he interrupted two gentlemen in their discourse about the celebrated Alexandrian library, by regretting that, on his way from Tennessee, he had missed seeing it; but, he added, he was then in a hurry to "get to Washington," "to cut off that d—d scoundrel Crawford's ears."

There are few, perhaps, who have not seen Gen. Jackson's note, on a copy of the letter from the whitewashing committee at Nashville, which he forwarded to Mr. Force, of Washington city. I subjoin a transcript, verbatim et literatim, of that precious composition:

"When the midnight assassins plunges his dagger to the heart, & ruffles your goods, the turpitude of this scene looses all its horrors when compared with the act of the secrete assassins poinard levelled against femal charecter by the hired minions of power."

It must not be supposed that all the leisure hours of the "second Washington" are passed in literary amusements. Occasionally he gives a negro ball at the President's mansion; or discharges the graver offices of bullying ministers of the Gospel and mechanics, cursing the Senate, and complaining that the minds of the *Chief Justice* and *Mr. Madison* have decayed.



clared in his place, that the responsibility for them rested not on Mr. Van Buren, but on General Jackson—on the President, an officer not then before the Senate, nor amenable to it, except in the contingency, which has never yet occurred, of his impeachment.

It should be observed that the excuse referred to, admits General Jackson's imbecility to the whole extent of the charge. But he is not entitled to the full benefit of even this miserable plea. I agree with the gentlemen who adopt this line of defence, that in matters of State policy, his want of knowledge makes him dependent on the aid of others, and of course that his advisers become his dictators. But to all the details of his proscriptive and bribing system, he is quite competent himself. His natural impulses need no prompting, where oppression is the object; and his understanding is precisely of the description, to find exercise and amusement in superintending the details of such a system. Whenever his passions are roused, his will is as absolute, as, in cases where intellectual action is required, it is from necessity, submissive. This imbecility is of course accompanied with acts of treachery to his friends. His conflicting promises to them contribute largely to that crooked policy for which, his boasts of "frankness," notwithstanding, he is almost as much distinguished as Louis XI. of France was. His similitude to this monarch is, indeed, as great as can be supposed to exist between a man of feeble mind, and a man of abilities. Louis is reported to have declared that "the King knew not how to reign, who knew not how to dissemble; and that, for himself, if he thought his very cap knew his secrets, he would probably throw it into the fire." And so Jackson, speaking of his secrets, told Buchanan, "he would conceal them from the very hairs of his head. That if he believed his right hand then knew what his left hand would do, upon the subject of appointments to office, he would cut it off and cast it into the fire." One point of difference between these deceivers is, however, remarkable. The French King kept in check his minister, *Oliver le Diable*; but the American *Diable* is notoriously viceroy over *his* master.

EDMUND PENDLETON.

## THE CRISIS.

## LETTER III.

*To the Honorable JOSIAH S. JOHNSTON, U. S. Senator.*

SIR: If General Jackson's character and conduct were universally understood, the continued toleration of him by any portion of the American People, would give the patriot ample cause to fear lest their institutions should be as transitory as they are glorious. But the People would be slandered by the supposition that they have full knowledge on these points, and can yet restrain for a single moment an almost unanimous burst of indignation. To prevent them from seeing the chief magistrate as he is, has been the constant aim of himself and his flatterers; and to a certain degree they have succeeded. One powerful engine of the delusion is the patronage of the Executive; an engine which the present incumbent has wielded in all its force, with unswerving direction and untiring industry, to effect that object, so dear to his ambition, to his avarice and to his dotage, —a re-election to the Presidency. The new tenure of office is as well understood as if it were announced in the laws of Congress. The time has gone by when public functionaries could exercise the right of freemen to express their opinions on political subjects. Now, they all feel and know that but one opinion on such matters is permitted by the chief magistrate, and that even their omission of the regular plaudits, would be reported by some spy or expectant to the eunuchs of the palace. Their hard lot realizes the prediction which was once thundered from the camp of their chief. They are expected "to cover all his approaches to arbitrary power; to defend each measure of misrule and corruption; to find excuses and apologies for every act of imbecility, although the interests and honor of the country may be jeopardized by ignorance, apathy, or neglect; but above all, to subject those who do not think the existing power entitled to the confidence of the People, to the most unsparing calumny and abuse." "The action of such a body of men," said another apostle of Jacksonism, "supposing them to be animated by



one spirit, must be tremendous in an election; and that they will be so animated is a proposition too plain to need demonstration." The demonstration, whether needed or not, has been supplied by the vassalage of the Executive officers in this reign of terror. The Post Office, with its seven thousand official dependants, has been diverted from its original design, to become an army of political stipendiaries, ready to furnish detachments for operating on elections, circulating false intelligence, and discharging the primary duties of espionage and delation. The press, the boasted sentinel of freedom, has become, as to a large portion of it, the pioneer of despotism. Having before adverted to President Jackson's practices towards the press, I now add the remark, that a print, established at the seat of the national Government, by Executive influence, including the direct agency of the President, takes the lead in preaching servile doctrines, and that these are echoed and re-echoed by a "mercenary squadron," as Mr. Hamilton, of South Carolina, would style them, of affiliated newspapers. This journal had existed only a few months, when it boasted of immense patronage. The boast, if well founded, demonstrates that the public treasury has been prostituted to its aggrandisement; for the general heaviness of its lucubrations forbids the supposition, that its nominal list of subscribers is real or voluntary. In the whole history of party warfare, never were the columns of any print so lumbering, except when they are animated by the venom of the reptile which has been made to assume the form of a treasury Auditor. As the depravity of this wretch denies to him the impunity of oblivion, it may be well to remember that he obtained his office, in order as he said, that he might "aid the President in proving that reform is not an empty sound," and to aid his "illustrious President in his arduous duties;" and that he published, a few days after he was rewarded, but *before* the Senate passed on his nomination, an official letter exhibiting his official creed. In this letter he says, "the interest of the country demands that this office shall be filled with *men of business*, and not with *babbling politicians*." A few days previous, he had expelled some valuable journals from his office, because, he declared in a circular letter, they were "not useful to him in the dis-

charge of his official duties." Preceding evidence on the subject has not long ago been corroborated by a witness who was in the secrets of the faction, when Kendall came to Washington, in 1829; and who testifies concerning the bargain by which he was to receive the appointment of Fourth Auditor, in consideration for writing for the Government press.

The Post Office and the press, those powerful engines for influencing public opinion, about which, during the last administration, so many pious alarms were sounded, and so many patriotic harangues and reports were elaborated, are now claimed as the instruments of the Executive. The same claim is urged to every other department of the public service. When such numerous classes of the community, scattered about the country, and reflecting the power of the Government, are incited by the feudal duties of their condition, to discard the restraints of truth and justice, by incessant eulogy on the President, and incessant slanders on his political opponents, is it strange that misapprehensions in relation to both should, to a certain extent, exist? The profligate spirit in which the patronage of the Government is wielded—a spirit shrinking from no falsehood however atrocious or absurd—is too plainly illustrated by the history of the present administration to permit any doubt of its corrupting power on public opinion.

The direct interest of the functionaries of the Government in producing this result, is scarcely more energetic than the impulse to contribute to it, which is felt by another portion of the community. That class of General Jackson's adherents, commonly called the "hurrah boys," are, perhaps, comparatively sincere in their clamors. They feel a cordial sympathy in the fame of a man, destitute, like themselves, of virtue and intelligence; their *esprit du corps* prompts them to shower plaudits on him, which grow louder as the proofs of his demerit accumulate; they deprecate his downfall as an abrupt termination of their millenium; they feel that in him they have triumphed, and shown their strength; and in sustaining him, they are not without the hope, inspired by his example, of imitating his success. The noise of these persons is not without its effect on tranquil minds, that prefer acquiescence to controversy.



The misapprehensions concerning General Jackson, to which I have adverted, are increased by another, and, at first sight, paradoxical cause—the enormity of his conduct. Its features, when truly portrayed, are so hideous, that the picture is received as a caricature. But the primary reason for the apathy of a portion of the public mind in regard to him, is to be sought in the want of concerted action among his opponents. And there, assuredly, it will be found. While the assemblage of factious interests that availed themselves of his military reputation to exalt him to the Presidency, have moved with a unity which seems almost miraculous when their heterogeneous elements are considered, his opponents have but too often exerted their vigor in irregular movements, or have reposed on the inherent energies of a cause which they knew to be just. Many concurrent reasons for this diversity, may, doubtless, be plausibly assigned. But a sufficient explanation is found written in that mournful volume—the human heart. Burke has said, and I fear too truly, “in doing good we are generally cold, and languid, and sluggish; and *of all things afraid of being too much in the right*. But the works of malice and injustice are quite in another style. They are finished with a bold, masterly hand; touched as they are with the spirit of those vehement passions that call forth all our energies whenever we oppress and persecute.” Happily for mankind, it is the tendency of the republican polity, properly understood and cherished, to elevate the character of the citizen, not only above that of the subject in a monarchy, but even above many of the infirmities of their common nature. If such infirmities have of late, in our once favored country, enervated the zeal of the virtuous, let them read in her misfortunes the rebuke of their lethargy: let them derive from their past failures a lesson for their future conduct; and by a patriotism as industrious as it has always been sincere, counteract the selfishness, the audacity, and the vitious intrigues of their confederated foes.

The unity of action which I have designated as a feature of Jacksonism, well deserves to characterize a better system. When bold and bad men, moving in a solid phalanx, urge on our liberties to the very brink of a precipice, good men are bound, by the highest obligations, human and di-

vine, to unite in repelling the assailants, and preventing the parricidal deed. Apologies for inertness, at best but effeminate, are, in such a crisis, made criminal by their tendency, however pure may be their source. In the great NATIONAL REPUBLICAN PARTY which has enlisted under the banner of the constitution, a drooping associate is sometimes found: not oftener, I admit, than every other virtuous party finds a coward at its breast. Such a recreant fears Gen. Jackson's popularity. He would be afraid of his own shadow. Until our liberties are destroyed, the popularity of a public man, to be lasting, must be meritorious. If it be not founded on a solid basis, though accident and deceit may inflate it for the moment, yet, like other bubbles, it has its time for bursting. The sources of Gen. Jackson's popularity we can all perceive. Among the many indications that it is fast approaching its fate, none is perhaps more conspicuous than his vaunt, that "*it can stand any thing.*" A high public officer, who can thus defy the pride, as well as the moral sense, of a virtuous and high-spirited People, must surely be one of those "whom, when God intends to destroy, he first makes mad." This boasted popularity, built up as well by timid adversaries as by zealous sycophants, must ultimately be dissolved into thin air, under the intense gaze of the free-men of America. The admissions of Gen. Jackson's incompetency for the Presidency, which his unofficial adherents are heard making at every hour of the day, and in every vicinage of the Union, is a political thermometer not to be mistaken. Even so recently as one year ago, after that incompetency had been developed, such instances of candor were rare, except under the seal of secrecy. Now, when there is a fair prospect of a "Reform" in public opinion, many of the very men who got up this pageant of Gen. Jackson's popularity to frighten their opponents, are confessedly ashamed of it themselves. Conceding that enough of it remains not to be contemned, I would yet ask, is this a time for the fears of those opponents to rise into a panic?

Not many months since, there were a few, a very few—I trust there is not one now—persons claiming to be National Republicans, whose timidity was of a philosophical cast. These gentlemen undertook to reason away our blood-bought liberties in some such manner at this: "Political controver-



sy is apt to engender bad blood, and to open bitter fountains. It ought, therefore, to be avoided, unless certain to produce good results. General Jackson's administration has, to be sure, disgraced the country; but then his election had before disgraced it. And, though his popularity has diminished, it is still formidable enough to throw doubt on the issue of a contest with him. It is better to bear quietly our national dishonor for another period of four years, than to engage, for the contingency of preventing it, in a struggle that must be acrimonious, and may not be successful." Such is the miserable sophistry with which a well meaning man can sometimes endeavor to palliate his inertness!

In justice, though not with alacrity, I concede to this shivering logician, that the election and administration of Andrew Jackson *have* fixed a stain on our country's honor. But is this a reason why another stain shall be added? As well might the unhappy female who has once lapsed from chastity, adduce that single indiscretion as a plea for future prostitution. True it is, that the habitual infringer of our constitution and laws was elected to administer them: true it is, that, though all history held up her flaming beacons to warn us against giving civick trusts as rewards for mere military service, we neglected her cautions: true it is, that, in a Government resting on virtue as its foundation, we placed at its head a man weltering in ignorance, and enslaved by hideous passions: true it is, that, when this was done, the patriot trembled, and well might he tremble, for his country: and true it is, that the progress of this fearful experiment has served to darken the sadness of his soul. The original brightness of the republic has departed. However gloriously her sun may rise hereafter, one spot will be on his disk. The genius of human liberty had watched her course with gladdened eyes. But when she turned from it, though for a moment only, to the old path of peril and ruin, he meditated on the fall of all former popular governments, and its causes; on his consequent despair of popular freedom; on his new hope, wakened by the career of the great Western Republic; and on the glorious promise of her youth, just wantonly jeopardized. He may have exclaimed, in the melancholy language of the poet,

" *She* stood beside me, like my youth,  
 " Transform'd for me the real to a dream,  
 " Clothing the palpable and the familiar  
 " With golden exhalations of the dawn.  
 " Whatever fortunes wait my future toils,  
 " The *beautiful* is vanish'd—and returns not."

But, though the resplendent vision on which philanthropy had fixed her fondest hopes, has been partially shaded, let us not, by a base despondency, produce its total, its everlasting eclipse. Shall a hypochondriacal shudder at the inconveniences of a conflict be indulged, when the consequence of our inactivity will be our country's ruin? Shall any American patriot *dare* to despair of the American Republic? Because a generous and confiding People have been once deceived, must they be ruined beyond redemption? To such questions, an indignant negative will be responded from every corner of the empire, and the answer will be echoed from WASHINGTON'S grave.

The want of concert, so long the reproach of our party, cannot now, there is every reason to believe, be justly imputed to it. The proceedings of the Convention which met in December last, at Baltimore, have cheered the patriot, and filled with anxious forebodings the tyrant's heart. The prospect of distracted councils among his adversaries, on which he had relied, has been annihilated by the prompt and sagacious action of that Convention;—an assembly of persons delegated by the great body of American citizens opposing the administration, to deliberate on our national grievances, and to propose a remedy. That dignified assembly has executed the trust confided to it, by recommending a thorough change in the Administration, and by designating two individuals as the principal ministers of the contemplated reform. In nominating HENRY CLAY for the Presidency, it has named a man who stands first in the unbiassed judgment of his country, and to whom no eulogy is appropriate, but his history from the period when he first participated in her councils. In the selection of a candidate for the Vice Presidency, it has shown a just sense of the dignity of that office. If any citizen of these United States can be placed in it, who is fitted by profound and cultivated



genius, ripe experience, habits of business, regulated passions, and unblemished virtue, to discharge the functions of a Vice President, and the yet higher duties which contingencies may devolve on him, that man is JOHN SERGEANT, of PENNSYLVANIA.

The proceedings which have been noticed, can be contemplated in no light that does not reflect honor on the Convention. The personal popularity arising from military success, which General Jackson brought with him to the Presidential chair, though greatly impaired by the disgrace he has cast upon it, is nevertheless not to be despised. While any considerable portion of it remains, the hope of defeating a man into whose support originally, so much passion entered, through any opposing candidate, who does not, besides his recommendations to the judgment of the People, possess a strong hold on their affections, would argue a want either of sagacity or candor. Providence seems to have graciously indicated a returning kindness for the People that had trifled with his bounties, by disposing their patriots to adopt a leader, at once pre-eminently fitted for government, and endeared to the hearts of his fellow citizens. Individuals of all parties, discordant as they may be on other topics, all agree in the opinion that Mr. CLAY and General JACKSON possess more personal popularity than any other prominent public men in the nation. It rests, indeed, in the two instances, on very different foundations; and while CLAY's is increasing, JACKSON's is on the wane. Conceding to the incumbent a sufficient remnant of his former popularity to render him dangerous, does not common sense tell us, that, even were Mr. CLAY less qualified for the Chief Magistracy than he confessedly is, his personal credit with the People, as well as his political strength, requires his unanimous support by the National Republicans; as the only practical measure which they can resort to? The question admits of but one answer. All invitations, therefore, to a union between the interests hostile to the administration, with a view to any candidate other than Mr. CLAY, must be the suggestions of infirm judgments, selfish passions, or of the common enemy. And in this light they were properly regarded by the December Convention.

EDMUND PENDLETON.

## THE CRISIS.

## LETTER IV.

*To the Honorable JOSIAH S. JOHNSTON, U. S. Senator.*

SIR: I feel no desire to scan too closely the motives of the anti-masonic nominations. While the great mass of the party in whose name they were presented to the public, are honest in their convictions, other causes unquestionably influenced the leaders who had stimulated their zeal into fanaticism. Perhaps no individual of that extraordinary party has been so much deceived as the citizen, avowedly not belonging to it, whom its delegates undertook to nominate as their candidate for the Presidency. With unfeigned respect for the head and the heart of WILLIAM WIRT, I must be permitted to suppose, that the sagacity which had marked his professional career, deserted him when he lent his name to the idle scheme of reaching political greatness through the path of bigotry, and of overthrowing, in his way, both the National Republican party and the Jackson faction. Could he expect that a majority of the nation could be persuaded to infuse into their institutions a new and alien element of discord? that the friends of such a man as Mr. CLAY would forsake him even in the hour of disaster? or that the great party which had sustained him through years of persecution, would relinquish him when his strength had grown formidable, and his triumph seemed near? Could Mr. Wirt expect that a man honorably known, indeed, like himself, in the walks of forensic and literary fame, but politically a stranger to the People, could possibly succeed, where HENRY CLAY, the "child and the champion" of their institutions, might fail? If any such fancies presided over the unguarded hour when Mr. Wirt accepted the nomination in September, his manly mind has, doubtless, by this time, relieved itself from their influence. The honest and intelligent portion of the anti-masons have already, it may be hoped, recovered from their infatuation. Their cooler judgments must assent to the principle advanced by Mr. CLAY, in answer to the Indiana gentlemen, that a President of the United States has no constitutional power to promote or to



restrain masonry, and that, therefore, the questions involved in anti-masonry are altogether foreign to national politics. Their candor cannot fail to appreciate justly the magnanimity that prompted this declaration—a magnanimity disdaining the subterfuges of Gen. Jackson in evading puzzling questions, but speaking the truth freely and frankly, without regard to consequences. Their knowledge of Mr. CLAY assures them, that, as President of the United States, he will never knowingly permit the laws to be violated with impunity, by a mason, an anti-mason, or any one else. Their patriotism forbids us to doubt that, as they agree with us in opposition to Gen. Jackson, they will also agree with us in supporting CLAY, the great national candidate. Such co-operation is not perhaps to be expected from the aspirants who, for their own private ends, have joined the anti-masonic party, or from the exiles or derelicts of other parties, who have joined it in the hope of recalling public attention to themselves.

To our united condition, the state of the adversary presents a striking contrast. Whatever pensioners or expectants may pretend, it is quite clear that the discipline, exact as it is, of the Jackson faction, is no longer able to preserve even the semblance of cohesion among its various and conflicting interests. Brought together by no principle of public policy, it exhibits, in the personal broils and political jars of its members, symptoms not to be mistaken, of the approach of that complete separation which has already partially taken place. Its imbecile chief, incapable of preserving the necessary equipoise between his rival adherents, has suffered one portion of them to make another his enemies. His former partisans in one State have solemnly denounced him for usurpation and perfidy, and those in other States denounce him, less formally indeed, but not less deeply. The pretences of national policy by which it was attempted to procrastinate his fall, have severally been stript naked before the public eye. The most egregious of them all, his claim to peculiar merit for not subverting the system for extinguishing the Public Debt, which the wisdom of Congress devised almost fifteen years ago, and every subsequent Administration has been executing, is on its face a scandalous imposition. The true character of the claim was placed in

full relief by the Treasury report of December last:—A document which, in order to acquire the name of paying off, during “*my* administration,” the small residue of the debt, charged with an average annual interest of only 4 or 4½ per cent. proposed to sell the bank stock of the nation, yielding an annual interest of 7 per cent.; of course to sacrifice its dividends for ever, and contingently to mortgage the ordinary revenue of the Government.

Another forlorn hope was sought in the re-organization of the cabinet. The President discharged the old one, taking care to provide amply out of the public Treasury for that member of it who had caused its dissolution; and, as it appears from his own declaration, recently made known to the Senate,\* he had, previously to the dissolution, arranged this honorable and lucrative retreat for the Favorite. He has presented the nation with a new set of Secretaries, and he has been able, as he expected, “to find an Attorney General somewhere.” The new cabinet, it was predicted, would live with him in all the harmony of angels. But his new Secretary of the Treasury has, in the document just noticed, substantially denounced his fondly cherished scheme of prostrating the People’s bank. The denunciation, if sincere, argues as little for the continuance of the present “Unit,” as, on the supposition of its being preconcerted between the President and his Minister, it affords any chance that such a deception on the part of Gen. Jackson can ultimately escape public exposure, and public scorn. No cabinet harmony, however, even could it exist in perfection, can save him. The popular mind indicates too plainly its growing conviction, that partial renovations of the Executive councils are inadequate to heal the wounded honor of the country, and to recover her lost ground, while the present Chief Magistrate retains his seat. A contrary expectation would, indeed, be the most pitiable of delusions. As well might we expect the body to be vigorous in its members, when the heart is rotten to the core.

It is not the slightest proof of the extremity to which the faction has been reduced by the operation of its inherent vices, and by the intrigues of Martin Van Buren, that, while

\* See Mr. Poindexter’s speech on Mr. Van Buren’s nomination.



it boasts of majorities in both Houses of Congress, it is without efficient leaders in either. To whom, in this gloomy hour, can it look, in the Senate, for light, guidance, or counsel? Not surely to the nauseating Benton, with his lumber of quotations, and arrayed in that shirt of Nessus, the East Room letter. It cannot rely on the exhausted treacheries of Smith, nor on the querulous inanity of Forsyth. The *Anti-Eatonism* of Hayne has discredited him at the palace: the temporary importance which he owed to WEBSTER's charity in treating him as an opponent, has been lost in the vortex of Nullification. Livingston and Woodbury are rewarded; Tazewell is a rebel; and Grundy is suspected. The only Senator, who has both the will and the dexterity to fill the mendicant office of leader, is one long since made powerless by his infamy.

In the House of Representatives, the case is equally hopeless: for though there the faction is not without a nominal manager, his abilities would shine more in hastening, than in retarding the fall of a sinking cause. He is, I agree, not without some meritorious claims to the post which has been assigned to him. His zeal for Retrenchment has been encouraged by heavy contracts, and other bounties from the public purse. If he is excelled by Free Tom in the number, he surpasses that factionary in the *weight* and in the ingenuity, of his franking achievements. He has, moreover, his points of resemblance to the "Greatest and Best of men." Like him, he is a hero; for he has killed an Indian, in the newspapers at least: though destitute of wisdom, he has cunning enough, when his own words are brought home to him, to raise a possibility that he may have used others: and, though "illiterate as a pig," he can, nevertheless, sign his name to the writings of other People. But he still more closely approximates to his model, in a turn for low intrigue, which he has had every advantage for improving under the tuition of the Reverend Obadiah B. Brown. The purity and dignity of his own domestic life, had recommended him to the discriminating mind of the Executive, as the most suitable agent for negotiating into society an excluded female. To protect the President from any imputation of having, in his selection, surrendered his judgment to his sympathies, some of his liegemen forthwith proclaimed his

diplomatist a candidate for the Vice Presidency. This nomination might deter some men, in similar circumstances, from assuming the duties of an active partisan in the House of Representatives; but to the new leader, if we may judge from some of his tastes, the indelicacy of the office is not perhaps the least of its charms. The pretensions to it, which, on his behalf, I have asserted, are, undoubtedly, imposing. But they are by no means sufficient to qualify him for his arduous trust. With all imaginable zeal to fix bribery and intimidation on the country, as rules of government, his mind is too narrow to embrace them as a system. The danger would be, that, while he is busy in adjusting the details of some particular bargain, the whole fabric of corruption may tumble into fragments.

Even if the measures contemplated by the National Republican party were to be essayed under discouraging circumstances, it would still be their duty to persevere, trusting the event to the great Judge of all things. But they have met their responsibility as good citizens, under every desirable advantage on their side, in their cause, in their candidate, in the condition of their adversary. Their cause is that of the constitution, the country, and human liberty, arrayed against the most atrocious system of despotism ever yet attempted under the forms of a Republic. In their candidate for the Chief Magistracy, they offer to their country, the first statesman and orator in the world: a citizen long and variously tested, experienced and pre-eminent in every department of her service, and in the full vigor of a mighty mind; familiar with her multiform relations, foreign and domestic, with her history, and with the genius of her Government; devoted to her institutions; wise in council and true in action; and whose soul is the very temple of honor. And whom do they invoke her to exchange for such a President? A man, whose ignorance is a by-word; who is made, by his imbecility, the prey of the bad, and by his vices the bane of the good; whose malignant passions have prematurely superannuated him, and whose infirmities, physical and mental, are notoriously hurrying him to that grave with which he taunted the venerable Mr. Nourse; whose usurpations have inflicted deep wounds on the constitution; whose tyranny has gone far to discredit the whole system of popular sove-



reignty; who, when he ceased to be a soldier, lost even the name of the frankness and generosity usually ascribed to the military character, and became known as a double-dealer, false to his promises, to his country, to his friends, to every thing but his own wretched ambition. That the Republic can longer tolerate a nominal Chief Magistrate, whose character has thus developed itself, is a supposition too monstrous to be admitted. Our present condition is too contrariant to the moral order of things, to continue another year. Either the past misconceptions of General Jackson's character must be revived, or he must politically fall. That the latter alternative will be realized, the signs of the times encourage us to hope.

I have noticed the distraction in the adversary's camp, as one omen to us of victory. But, his distraction will avail us nothing, if a similar evil be permitted to enter our ranks, and but little if we omit to organize and to execute a system of operations. The NATIONAL REPUBLICANS style themselves a party; and they need not be ashamed of the title. "PARTY," said the great political philosopher whom I have before cited, *"is a body of men united for promoting, by their joint endeavors, the national interest, upon some particular principle in which they are all agreed."* This definition suggests that of FACTION, *as a body of men united for promoting, by their joint endeavors, their own interests upon pretended principles, in which they are not all agreed.* Who does not see, in the first of these definitions, the picture of General Jackson's opponents, and in the second that of his supporters? The National Republicans have undertaken to manifest that they are indeed a PARTY, by the solemn pledge to their country, conveyed in their address. They have, also, plighted their faith to the citizen on whom their preference has fallen, "to use all honorable means to ensure [his] elevation to the chair of chief magistrate of this Republic." What are the duties implied in these pledges? To surrender all sectional and individual interests at the shrine of the common weal: To act promptly, vigorously, constantly, and with mutual concert: To plant a committee of vigilance and correspondence in every part of the Union, even where they may be a small minority: To open their purses, to raise their voices, and to move their pens, in dif-

fusing correct information throughout the country: To counteract the incessant falsehoods of the enemy by watchfulness and refutation: When one of these falsehoods is published, not to rest content with a single disproof, but to reiterate the disproof over and over again: To display in their true colors the character and deeds of President Jackson, his advisers, and his instruments: To rise above that idle fastidiousness which avoids an act, just in itself, lest the *adversary* may impute it to unworthy motives: To call things by their true names, and not to be "*afraid of being too much in the right*:" To exhibit the confidence justified by their position and by their strength: To learn instruction from the instances in which the Jacksonites have achieved what to themselves had seemed doubtful, by presenting a bold front, and looking sure of victory, even when they had determined on retreat: To shun, indeed, the example set by those factionists, of falsely exaggerating their strength; but to avoid equally their own example of undue concession, and of digging into a particular success on their part, in order to detect in it some reason for timidity as to the general result: To turn a deaf ear to the boasts of the enemy: And always to remember that most incontestable of all political truths—a *party which acts as if it expected defeat, will, assuredly, be defeated*. Unless these, and other obvious duties, be faithfully discharged, even the goodness of our cause, and the animating circumstances surrounding it, may fail to sustain it, in these troubled times, against a faction whose desperation increases, as it grows weaker; and which would drain the National Treasury of its last dollar, to preserve its power, so foully won, and so foully used.

Though aware, Sir, of the attraction of your name, I have not, in inscribing these papers to you, been actuated solely, or even principally by that consideration. I had the direct object of invoking you to aid your country in this season of peril, by efforts even greater than those which have already so distinguished you in her service, and by the active exertion of the influence which you deservedly possess. Your patriotic counsels will enlighten the minds of others, and your high example will stimulate them to energy and perseverance in the noble enterprise of saving the Republic. Let every patriotic citizen, hostile to the present Administra-



tion, act as he would act, if convinced that, on him singly, the fate of his country depended, and the good cause will prevail; liberty will return to her altars; the institutions, bought with the blood of our fathers, will be rescued; and the American Republic will again become the admiration and the hope of mankind.

EDMUND PENDLETON.

*February, 1832.*

*Erratum.*—Page 22, line 6, instead of “*for writing,*” read “*of writing.*”

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Samuel P. Anderson.

February 1832.

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